

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceVLR- 6/20/89  
NRHP- 12/26/89National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name SEVEN OAKS FARM AND BLACK'S TAVERN  
other names/site number CLOVERPLAINS DHR 02-71

## 2. Location

street & number U.S. ROUTE 250 ☐ not for publication  
city, town GREENWOOD ☒ vicinity  
state VIRGINIA code VA county ALBEMARLE code 003 zip code 22943

## 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	14	0 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	0	0 objects
		14	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register N/A

## 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.☐ removed from the National Register.☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - hotel (Black's Tavern)  
Domestic - single dwelling (main House)  
Domestic - secondary structures

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - secondary structure  
Domestic - single dwelling  
Domestic - secondary structures

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Vernacular (Black's Tavern)  
Mid-19th Century: Greek Revival; Colonial  
Revival (Main House)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone; brick  
walls log (Black's Tavern) Weatherboard  
(all other buildings)  
roof shake (Black's Tavern) Metal  
other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

### SUMMARY ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Seven Oaks farm is an estate of approximately 109 acres located on the north side of U.S. Route 250 in the Greenwood vicinity of western Albemarle County. The historic buildings on the property include the main residence (built circa 1847-1848), the log house known as Black's Tavern (built circa 1769), an octagonal ice-house, and more than a dozen other nineteenth-century frame residences and agricultural buildings. All are in excellent condition. The main residence is a two-story, five-bay, hipped-roof frame building with a three-bay north wing. The interior features a center hall plan and has retained its original Greek Revival mantles. Alterations at the turn of the century include the addition of a two-story pedimented portico and two polygonal bays. The original kitchen building is connected to the house by a one-story breezeway. Black's Tavern is a one-story, two-room, gable-roofed log house with a center chimney and shed-roofed porch. The logs are exposed on both the exterior and interior. Other buildings on the farm include an ice house, smokehouse, dairy, greenhouse, barns, a carriage house, a garage and several residences for farm employees.

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Seven Oaks farm is an estate of approximately 109 acres located on the north side of U.S. Route 250 in the Greenwood vicinity of Western Albemarle County, sixteen miles west of Charlottesville. The surrounding landscape is characterized by gently rolling hills and is overwhelmingly rural. The property rises steeply from its southern boundary along Route 250. The house and farm buildings (which are not visible from the highway) are approached by a paved drive and are surrounded by extensive boxwood gardens. The buildings on the farm are clustered at the end of this driveway. These include the main residence, the log house known as Black's Tavern and more than a dozen nineteenth century frame residences and agricultural buildings.

Seven Oaks House - The main residence at Seven Oaks is a two-story, five-bay frame house with a two-story, three-bay wing extending from the north and a standing-seam metal hipped roof. There is a door in the center bay of the south (front) and north (back) facades, each topped by square transoms and flanked by three-pane sidelights. All windows have simple Greek style architraves with roundels at the corners. The exterior is sheathed with horizontal weatherboard with beaded corner boards. There are two brick chimneys that rise from the center ridge line of the roof as well as one at the gable end of the north wing.

## 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Architecture

Agriculture

Period of Significance

1760's - 1815

1847 - early 1900's

1850's - early 1900's

Significant Dates

N/A

N/A

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

### SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Seven Oaks farm is architecturally significant for its well-preserved collection of buildings that span more than a hundred years of history in Albemarle County. These include an eighteenth-century log house, an ante-bellum frame house with Colonial Revival style additions, and several vernacular Victorian period residences, as well as some unusual mid-nineteenth-century agricultural buildings. The oldest of these, the log Black's Tavern, is locally significant in the history of transportation, as it is one of the last of the numerous taverns and ordinaries which once served travelers in western Albemarle County. The complex of agricultural buildings is also significant and includes an octagonal and an hexagonal outbuilding, an early smokehouse, and several barns, all in excellent condition.

### HISTORY:

Seven Oaks farm has been owned by a number of families prominent in the religious, educational, and political life of Albemarle County. The land was originally patented in 1744 to Richard Stockton, an early settler who gave his name to the creek that flows near the property. In 1751 four hundred acres of this grant were purchased for four hundred pounds by the Rev. Samuel Black. 1 Rev. Black (d. 1770), a native of Forks of Brandywine, Pennsylvania, had received a ministerial call in March 1747 from fifty-seven members of the Mountain Plains and Ivy Creek congregations who soon after formed the D.S. (variously interpreted by historians to mean "dissenter" or David Stockton) congregation. 2 Rev. Black was thus the first Presbyterian minister to settle in Albemarle County. He, like so many other colonial-era ministers, supplemented his income by teaching a boys' school, perhaps on his property.

Both Samuel and James Black, his sons, built their houses on a portion of their father's land. Rev. Black's will, dated 1770, mentions the "log house he [Samuel] hath now built." 3 Samuel, who was a county magistrate and farmer, later added a shed to this two-room house and lived there with his family until his death in 1815. The house built by Samuel Black is still standing and is well documented in insurance records of the early

☒ See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Albemarle County Land Records, Charlottesville, Virginia  
Albemarle County Will Books, Charlottesville, Virginia  
Albemarle County Order Books, Charlottesville, Virginia  
Lay, K. Edward, Architectural Patterns Associated with Virginia Road Traces - Rockfish Gap Turnpike, (Virginia Road Traces: School of Architecture, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia) Volume II, Fall 1986.  
Mutual Assurance Company of Virginia, Fire Insurance Policies (Special Collections, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville).  
Rawlings, Mary, Ante-Bellum Albemarle - Albemarle County Virginia (Charlottesville: People's National Bank) 1935.  
Woods, Reverend Edgar, Albemarle County in Virginia, (Bridgewater, Virginia: N.P.) 1964

☐ See continuation sheet

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)  
has been requested  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings  
Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other

### Specify repository:

Va. Div. of Historic Landmarks  
221 Governor Street, Richmond, Va.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acres of property \_\_\_\_\_ Approximately 109 acres

### UTM References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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4	2	1	3	1	3	0
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D 

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4	2	1	2	4	3	0
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☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

See accompanying survey map showing current boundaries of Seven Oaks farm.

☐ See continuation sheet

### Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries include the fifteen contributing historic resources, including the main house, tavern building and associated out-buildings. The southern boundary also retains the farm's historic relationship to Route 250.

☐ See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Geoffrey B. Henry  
organization 1515 Rutledge Avenue date May 1989  
street & number Charlottesville, Virginia telephone 804-293-8006  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code 22903

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The original part of the house, built 1847-1848, features a single pile, center-hall plan with two rooms (a dining room and a pantry) in the north wing. The stair, which doubles back on itself, rises from the north-west corner of the hall. It features a narrow, late Federal style newel and molded handrail, two rectangular section banisters per tread, and simple scrollwork beneath the treads. All of the fireplaces (save one in the dining room) have retained their original Greek Revival style mantles, which display the austere design and simple moldings typical of the period. The mantle in the library features pilasters with simple stepped capitals.

On the second floor, there are three bedrooms, a sitting room, and three bathrooms.

Most of the renovations and additions made to Seven Oaks date from the turn of the century. At this time two small polygonal bays were added, one serving as an office, the other enlarging the dining room. The outside entrance to the office bay is flanked by engaged Ionic columns and topped by an arched window with fanlight muntins. In addition, a handsome two-story pedimented portico replaced the original one-story porch on the south facade. This portico boasts many fine Colonial Revival details including dentil molding, a molded frieze, a six-pane fanlight in the center of the pediment, and fluted Ionic columns on bases.

Although the floor plan of the original house was altered only by the addition of bathrooms and the downstairs office, much of the interior trim dates from the remodeling at the turn of the century. This includes the ceiling cornices as well as most of the baseboard and door trim. (Some original baseboard trim remains in the downstairs hall. Most of the doors are original). The granite mantle in the dining room is an exceptionally fine example of Colonial Revival design and features an elaborately carved frieze and paired engaged Ionic columns.

The original three-bay, one-story kitchen stands fifty feet to the northwest. It is connected to the house by an enclosed breezeway. This breezeway was enlarged to form a kitchen, and the original kitchen now serves as an office.

Black's Tavern - Black's Tavern is a one-story log double-pen building, four bays long and one bay wide, with an off-center stone fireplace and chimney. It is built on a stone foundation and has a gable roof sheathed with cedar shingles. It is constructed of squared pine logs joined with V-notches that have been exposed on both the exterior and interior. Two doors on the south facade provide separate access to each room. The small sliding six-pane windows are reconstructions of the originals. The cabin has a shed-roofed porch which extends along the entire south facade and is supported by simple hewn posts.

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The interior consists of two rooms of unequal size on either side of the hearth connected by an opening on the north. There is a large squared beam that serves as a mantle above the hearth in the smaller east room, and a small recess, probably once a closet or a stair, to the right of the hearth in the west room. An open stairway in the northwest corner of this room leads to the unheated attic story, which is lighted by a single window at each gable end.

Outbuildings:

Smokehouse - The smokehouse, probably the oldest of the many outbuildings at Seven Oaks, is a one-story frame structure with a steep pyramidal roof covered with cedar shingles. There is an entrance on the south facade. The interior is open to the roof. The exterior is sheathed with wood siding.

Icehouse - The octagonal icehouse, one of the few octagonal farm buildings in the county, stands directly to the north of the main house. Like the smokehouse it probably dates to before the Civil War. It features a roof covered with cedar shingles and is topped by a small cupola and an above-ground entrance on the northwest side. The interior extends several levels below ground and has been fitted with shelves and is now used for storage.

Servant's residence - This two-story, eight-bay, gable-roofed frame house has five entrances on the south facade and a shed-roofed porch with chamfered posts. The residence, now a guest house, features six-over-six sash windows with simple architrave molding. It dates from the 1880's.

Garage - This multi-bay garage, dating from the early 1900s, has entrances on the north and east facades and original narrow-width paneling on the interior. It stands to the north of the main house.

Chauffeur's residence - This four-bay, two-story, gable-roofed frame cottage with six-over-six sash windows and two entrances on the east facade stands to the north of the garage. It too dates from the early 1900s.

Two farmer's houses - One is a three-bay, two-story, gable-roofed late nineteenth century house with a two-bay wing which incorporates the original dairy house. The other stands at the far northeast corner of the complex and is three bays wide with a stuccoed exterior and a one-story wing to the rear.

To the east of the main house is a one-story hexagonal garden house with engaged columns and sash windows, two large frame barns and a green house, all early twentieth century in date.

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nineteenth century. A fire insurance policy written by the Mutual Assurance Society in September 1802 describes "my three buildings on my plantation now occupied by myself situated between the lands of William Ramsay and that of Isaac Harding." These buildings included a "wooden dwelling house covered with wood, 28 x 18, one story high with a shed of eight feet wide at one side and a Peaser [piazza or porch] in front of 8 feet wide." This was valued at \$650 for insurance purposes. There was also a "wooden barn covered with wood 52 feet by 18, two stories high" valued at \$230 and a "wooden still house" or distillery "covered with wood" valued at \$120. Policies were taken out again in 1806 and 1816 after Black's death. 4 A complete inventory was taken of Black's possessions after his death, which indicates his standing as a farmer, as he possessed four slaves, several head of cattle, sheep and horses, as well as a good collection of household furniture.

In addition to farming, Black also kept a tavern in his house for many years. According to county court records, he obtained tavern licenses for several different years in the 1780s and 1790s and as late as 1813 the county order books recorded that "Samuel Black proffered to this court the clerk's receipt for 11 dollars and 16½ cents, the tax imposed by law on houses of private entertainment." 5 Among the many visitors at Black's tavern was George Rogers Clark who recorded a visit here in the fall of 1777. 6 From the aforementioned insurance records it is apparent that Black also ran a distillery on his property.

The operation of a tavern or ordinary was closely regulated by the county governments of colonial Virginia. By law, all innkeepers had to secure licenses from the county at yearly intervals. In addition, the rates for accommodations and for liquor, beer and meals served at the ordinary were set annually by the county courts. The first order book of 1744-1748 for Albemarle County identified three taverns, one of them owned by Peter Jefferson, father of Thomas Jefferson. 7 By 1820 there were seventeen.

The proliferation of taverns during this period closely paralleled the expansion of the road system in the western half of Albemarle County. The route of the Rockfish Gap Road, which passes in front of Black's Tavern, dates from at least 1748 and provided access to the important Staunton and James River Turnpike. 8 The Rockfish Gap Road itself became a turnpike in 1827 in accordance with an Act of the General Assembly. Among the taverns along this route and the Three Notched Road west of Charlottesville were Wood's Tavern (now 1740 Antiques), the Brookeville Tavern, Yancey's Tavern, and Cocke's Tavern (now known as the Long House), the last built within sight of Black's Tavern across the road. Many other taverns were once located in this part of the county, but most have disappeared, leaving Black's Tavern as an important reminder of the transportation history of Albemarle County.

After Black's death in 1815, the house and land were sold to Alexander Garrett. 9 Garrett, who died in 1860, arrived in Albemarle County in 1794 and became one of its most important citizens. An attorney, he became county clerk in 1815 and served as clerk of the Circuit Court between 1819 and 1831. 10 In addition, he was a Trustee of Albemarle

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Academy, Proctor of Central College, and the first Bursar of the new University of Virginia. He lived most of his life in Charlottesville and at his farm in North Garden, but may have lived for a short period in Black's log house.

In 1847 he gave the old Black property to his son, Dr. John Bolling Garrett and daughter-in-law Evalina. 11 The younger Garrett was one of the first students enrolled at the University of Virginia and had gone on to further study at the Medical College of Virginia. It was he who built the two-story Greek Revival style frame house with detached kitchen directly to the southeast of the old tavern. After his death in 1856, most of his possessions were sold. The accounts of this sale, which carefully itemize all the furniture, paintings, books and silver, give many insights into the lifestyle and economic position of the Garrett family. 12

After Dr. Garrett's death, the farm was sold to the Bowen family, at which time it was named Cloverplains. In 1903, it was bought by Marion Langhorne of Richmond, a relative of Chiswell Dabney Langhorne, father of the famous Gibson girls, who lived at nearby Mirador. Three years later it was bought by Mr. and Mrs. Graham Harris. Before her marriage to Mr. Harris, Genevieve Harris (nee Genevieve Gordon Peyton) was the wife of Harry Langhorne and remained close friends with her sisters-in-law Irene Gibson and Nancy Astor, later Viscountess Astor. After her first husband's death, Genevieve resided at nearby Ramsay, still owned by the Gibson family. After Mirador was sold, both Mrs. Gibson and Lady Astor made Seven Oaks Farm their home when visiting Virginia. In 1974 the farm passed to the present owner, a nephew of the Harrisses, and has remained the home of five generations of the Harris and Peyton families.

The extensive alterations undertaken at Seven Oaks after the turn of the century, including the addition of the portico and the polygonal bays, were paralleled at many other fine Greenwood area residences during this period. Greenwood first became a fashionable Virginia locale at the turn of the century, and many older and unprepossessing houses were remodeled to suit the tastes of their new owners. The results were such well-known houses as Mirador, redone by Chiswell Dabney Langhorne, Blue Ridge Farm by the architect William Lawrence Bottomley, and Ramsay, remodeled by Charlottesville architect Milton Grigg.



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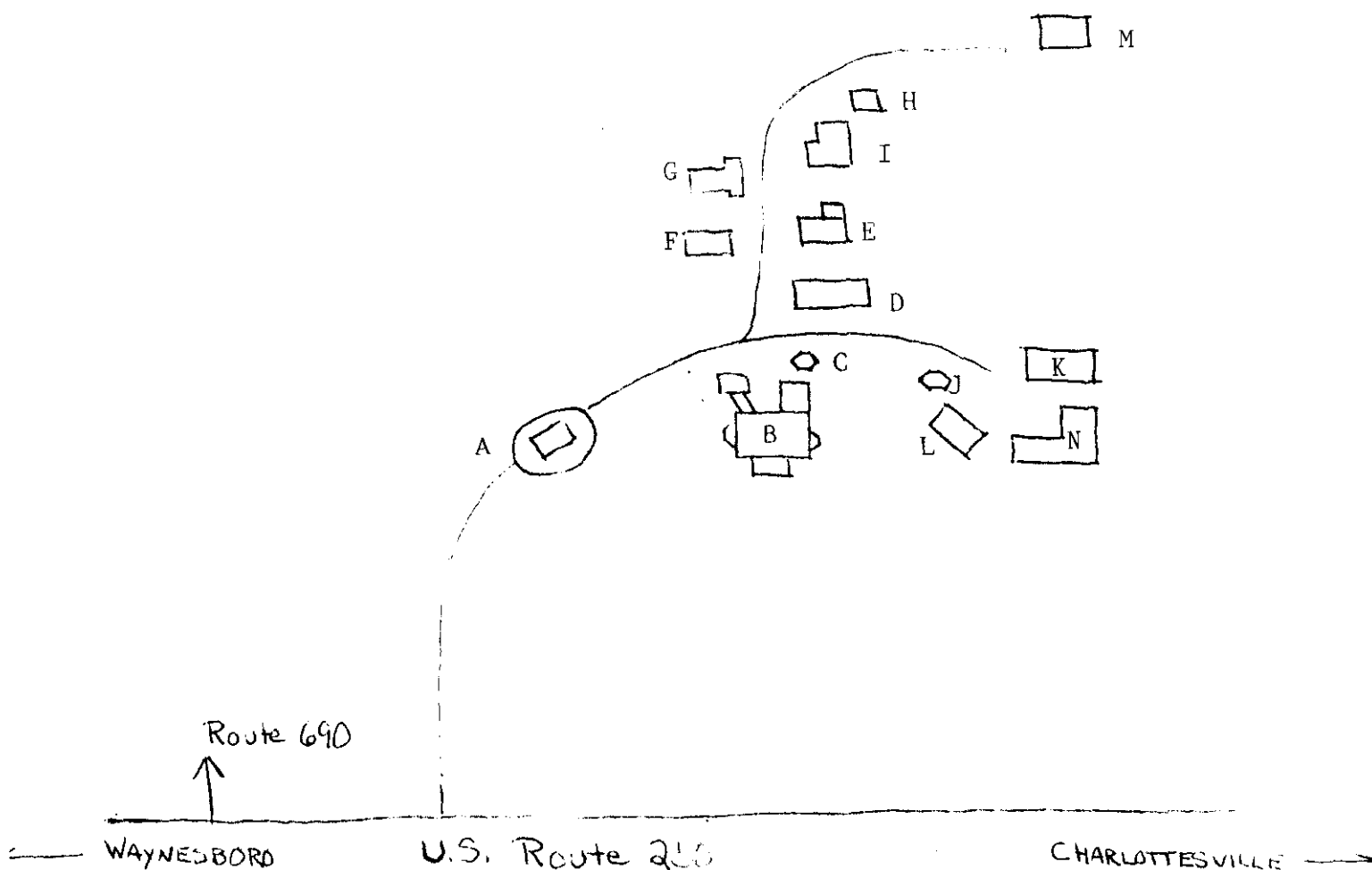
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References:

- 1 County Land Books, Deed Book 1, page 341.
- 2 Woods, Albemarle, page 165.
- 3 County Will Books, Will Book 6, page 113.
- 4 Mutual Assurance Society, Reel 4, Volume 36, Number 994 and Reel 2, Volume 6, Number 836.
- 5 County Order Books, (1813-1815) page 205.
- 6 Rawlings, page 34.
- 7 Order Books, (1744-1748) page 103.
- 8 Lay, Architectural Patterns, pages 47-48.
- 9 County Land Records, Deed Book 22, page 109.
- 10 Woods, Albemarle, page 201
- 11 County Land Records, Deed Book 51 page 384.
- 12 County Will Book 24, page 179.

SEVEN OAKS FARM  
Greenwood, Virginia  
(Map not drawn to scale)



KEY

- A-- Black's Tavern
- B-- Seven Oaks residence w/ kitchen
- C-- Hexagonal ice house
- D-- Servants' residence
- E-- Farm workers' residence
- F-- Garage
- G-- Residence and attached dairy
- H-- Smokehouse
- I-- Chauffeur's residence
- J-- Hexagonal garden building
- K-- Barn
- L-- Greenhouse
- M-- Farm Worker's residence
- N-- Carriage House

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B 17-691500-4212980

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